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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
20 September 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The India-Pakistan Situation
(Report #56 - As of 11:00 A.M. EDT)

1. Both Prime Minister Shastri and President Ayub Khan are holding emergency cabinet meetings today to discuss the UN cease-fire resolution. Shastri said the resolution deserved "careful consideration." Radio Pakistan reported the cease-fire resolution without comment.

2. Shastri told Parliament today that Chinese Communist troops had started firing on Indian border posts in Ladakh and Sikkim. Shastri charged that Peking is not looking for the redress of grievances, real or imaginary, but an excuse "to start its aggressive activities again, this time in collusion with its ally Pakistan." He also stated that China's basic objective "is to attain a position of dominance in Asia" which no self-respecting nation was prepared to recognize.

3. Additional Indian details concerning the "structures" on the Sikkim border was provided by General Manekshaw, Commander of the Eastern Command, in a conversation with the Consul General, Calcutta, on September 19. Manekshaw stated that defensive positions, including bunkers, had been constructed in the vicinity of both Natu La and Jelep La approximately 500 yards on the Chinese side prior to the 1962 fighting. The positions were abandoned in November 1962 and partially destroyed, although the "hulks" may remain and thus form the basis for the Chinese charges. The Indian reply of 17 September to the Chinese had admitted construction of posts only on the Sikkim side of the border, but otherwise agreeing with the above details on withdrawal from and partial destruction of the positions in late 1962.

State Department review completed

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India fears that the main defenses in Sikkim could be bypassed by Chinese use of undefended mountain trails that lead south from the Chumbi Valley through Bhutan and into West Bengal. Indian defense planning has been not to hold Bhutan, but to provide sufficient troops to delay a possible Chinese move through Bhutan.

5. Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi apparently changed the itinerary of his return trip to Peking from a Middleeast swing in order to avoid a stop-over in Pakistan. Chen made an unscheduled one day layover in Syria on 18 September and departed for home on 19 September via Kabul. The most logical explanation for the change in plan would be a high-level Pakistani request that China avoid any new moves which would support charges of collusion between Peking and Rawalpindi.

6. Pakistani Finance Minister Shoaib told US embassy officials on 19 September with apparent relish that Foreign Minister Bhutto had made a special trip to Karachi the day before in order to meet with Chen but had been "stood up." In Kabul, Chen reportedly told Afghan officials that the stop in the Afghan capital was the result of refusal by the Soviet Union to permit a landing in Tashkent.

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